



DR. KEARNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

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The Role of the School in Harm Reduction

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youth between 10 and 19 years of age. Youth who are contemplating suicide frequently give warning signs of their distress. Parents, teachers, and friends are in a key position to pick up on these signs and get help. It is very important to not take these warning signs lightly or promise to keep them a secret. When adults and students in the school community are committed to making harm reduction a priority—and are empowered to take proactive actions—we can be available to help youth before they engage in behavior with irreversible consequences.

Children and adolescents spend a substantial part of their day in school under the supervision of school personnel. Effective harm reduction is integrated with supportive mental health services, engages the entire school community, and is imbedded in a positive school climate through student behavioral expectations and a trustful student/adult relationship. It is important for students to be familiar with risk factors and warning signs of suicidal behavior. Our entire school staff are working to create an environment where students feel safe sharing such information.

During the month of November, students will listen to a presentation designed to give them information that will help them know what to do if they are at risk of hurting themselves. It will also provide students with options to use in the event of friends who are talking about hurting themselves.

If you have any questions regarding the presentation please contact Mr. Cresswell or Ms. Anielewicz at Dr. Kearney (250) 785-8378.

Thank you,

D.K. Counselling Team